UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/666,004	09/17/2003	Juei-Mei Wang		6608

			EXAMINER
25859	7590	06/16/2005	ALPERT, JAMES M

WEI TE CHUNG
FOXCONN INTERNATIONAL, INC.
1650 MEMOREX DRIVE
SANTA CLARA, CA 95050

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3624	

DATE MAILED: 06/16/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Office Action Summary	10/666,004	WANG, JUEI-MEI
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	James Alpert	3624	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE _3_ MONTH(S) FROM
THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed
  after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
  Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any
  earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _20 March 2005_.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL.**   2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is
closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) _1-11_ is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) _1-11_ is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All   b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage
application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

The following communication is in response to Applicant's amendment and

remarks filed on 20 March 2005. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not

included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Status of Claims

Claim 8 is currently amended. Claim 9 is canceled. Claims 1-7,10-11 are as

originally submitted. Claims 1-11 are currently pending.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 20 March 2005 have been fully considered but they

are not persuasive as to allowability. New grounds for rejection are presented below

along with responses to Applicant's remarks.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Land

et al., U.S. Patent #6807533, in view of Wong, U.S. Patent #6115690. Claims 6-7 are

rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Land in view of

Benshemesh, U.S. Patent Application Publication #20030033216. Claims 8-11 are

rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wong in view of Land.

With regard to Claim 1, Land teaches a system comprising:

a database server for storing accounts receivable data;
(Figure 2, item 36)

an application server that is electrically connected with the database server for
accessing and processing data stored in the database server, the application server
comprising: (Figure 2, item 40)

a data obtaining module for obtaining data from external systems,
(Figure 1, items 12 and 20, showing the server connected with an sales and inventory system)

an accounts receivable managing module for managing and updating the accounts receivable data stored in the database server, and
(Figure 6 and Col. 6 lines 6-20)

an account booking module for automatically generating accounting entries; and
(Figure 7 and Col. 6 lines 26-40)

a plurality of client computers electrically connected to the application server for downloading data from and uploading data to the database server.
(Figure 2, items 64-72)

Land does not specifically teach the following limitation:

a sales return managing module for managing accounting operations related to sales returns

However, Wong teaches this limitation at (Col. 20, lines 34-48), describing how sales returns can be automated with various other modules. The sales returns module is described thoroughly at Col. 29 line 23 and continuing until Col. 31 line 52. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time applicant's invention was made to modify the teachings of Land relating to an automated accounts receivable system to include the teachings of Wong relating to a sales returns subsystem. The motivation for such a modification is to diminish tasks that "are time-consuming and often take away resources of the corporation from its operations and other profitable activities," as described in Land at (Col. 1 lines 21-23).

Please consider the following limitation:

a sales discount managing module for managing accounting operations related to sales discounts.

In the previous Office Action, mailed 12 January 2005, the Examiner argued that Land suggested a sales discount module, while still combining Land with Lee, U.S. Patent Application Publication #20030074289. Applicant argues that his specification describes a variety of different types of "sales" discounts and rates. However, the Examiner must limit his analysis to the scope of the claims, and even then, the claims must be given the broadest reasonable interpretation. See *In re Hyatt*, 211 F.3d 1367, 1372, 54 USPQ2d 1664, 1667 (Fed. Cir. 2000). Thus the Examiner is of the opinion that the cash discounts described in Lee do, in fact, read on this limitation: cash discounts are one of a variety of types of "sales discounts".

Even so, in reviewing the Land reference in light of the Applicant's remarks, the Examiner is convinced that Land goes beyond suggesting a sales discount module to, in fact, disclosing one. See (Col. 10 lines 1-50) as well as (Figure 11, item 490). These portions of the reference discuss cash discounts, cash variances, exchange gains/losses, discounts and concessions, etc. It is clear that Land foresaw the need to make adjustments to the every-day, typical price of goods and/or services. This is sufficient to anticipate the Applicant's "sales discount."

With regard to Claim 2, Land teaches the system further comprising:

a data searching module for users to search the accounts receivable data and accounting entries data. (Col. 5 lines 58-60 and Col. 6 lines 62-65)

With regard to Claim 3, Land teaches the system further comprising:

a sales invoice managing module for managing sales invoices related to accounts receivable. (Col. 6 line 59 – Col. 7 line 27)

With regard to Claim 4, Land teaches the system wherein:

the application server electrically connects with a sales management system for accessing sales data stored in the sales management system and updating the accounts receivable data in the database server accordingly. (Figure 1 showing the AR server connected to the Order-Ship-Bill system; Figures 6,7; Col. 6 lines 6-41)

With regard to Claim 5, Land teaches the system wherein:

the application server electrically connects with an inventory management system for accessing delivery data stored in the inventory management system.
(Figures 6,7; Col. 6 lines 6-41)

With regard to Claim 6, and the following limitation:

retrieving advance payment data related to the purchase order according to the obtained purchase order data,

the Applicant argues that Figures 10 and 11 fail to expressly disclose and account for

"advance payment" data. The Examiner originally cited the Land reference at Figure 10,

items 436,456, Col.9 lines 17-24, describing other payment terms, Figure 11, item 490

and Col.10 lines 25-41, describing various payment adjustments. The Examiner

interprets the "other payment terms" received in step 440 of Figure 10 to anticipate the

type of "advanced payments" likely to happen in commercials settings. That is to say,

when a buyer contributes some amount of cash initially, this is typically recorded on a

sales invoice, with the remaining balance forwarded to accounts receivable. However,

the Examiner has yet to locate an express statement of "advance payment" in the Land

reference. But consider that retrieving advanced payment data is certainly old and well

known in the art, and is demonstrated in Benshemesh at (Page 2, Para. 25) and in

Claim 39. Thus if it is not held that Land anticipates,

retrieving advance payment data related to the purchase order according to the obtained purchase order data,

it is disclosed by Benshemesh, and it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill

in the art at the time applicant's invention was made to modify the teachings of Land

relating to an automated accounts receivable system to include the teachings of

Benshemesh, relating to retrieving advanced payment data. The motivation for such a

modification is to diminish tasks that "are time-consuming and often take away

resources of the corporation from its operations and other profitable activities," as

described in Land at (Col. 1 lines 21-23). Land further teaches the other limitations:

obtaining a delivery message showing that the purchase order is fulfilled;
(Figure 10, item 430; Col. 9 lines 10-11)

calculating an account receivable of the purchase order;
(Figure 10, item 436; Col. 9 lines 25-28)

generating a sales invoice of the purchase order according to the calculated account
receivable and the advance payment data; and
(Figure 10, item 432; Col. 9 lines 9-14)

generating one or more accounting entries according to the calculated account
receivable and the advance payment data.
(Figure 10, item 462; Col. 9 lines 25-28)

With regard to Claim 7, Land teaches a method further comprising:

generating an invoice according to the retrieved advance payment data.
(Col. 9 line 17-24; Col. 10 lines 24-41, each describing other payment terms than simple
credit on accounts receivable)

With regard to claim 8, Applicant argues that Wong at (Col. 17 lines 17-20)

does not disclose:

confirming fulfillment of a purchase order released by a customer according to a
delivery message related to the purchase order;

The Examiner disagrees in that the system in Wong provides "simultaneous access to up-to-date information about the status" of orders placed by a customer, including when the order has been shipped. When an item ships, the order is fulfilled. Wong anticipates this limitation.

Wong further teaches:

determining whether a sales return has occurred on the purchase order;
(Col. 46 lines 49-66; Col. 49 lines 23-32)

With regard to the following limitations:

determining whether the customer has accepted an alternative arrangement for the purchase order if a sales return has occurred, and

reconfirming fulfillment of the purchase order if the customer has accepted the alternative arrangement;

The examiner takes Official Notice that the idea of offering a customer an alternative to a return, such as an exchange for present or future merchandise is old and well known in the art. As such, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time applicant's invention was made to modify the teachings of Wong relating to an automated web commerce system with accounts receivable subsystem and sales return module to include the steps of offering alternatives to a return, and the fulfillment of the order. The motivation for such a modification is to provide customers with flexibility so that they will feel comfortable with the shopping process, thereby increasing sales.

Continuing, Wong teaches:

canceling one or more sales invoices related to the purchase order if the customer has not accepted the alternative arrangements;
(Col. 29 lines 23-52)

balancing one or more accounts receivable related to the purchase order; and
(Col. 29 line 58 – Col. 30 line 9)

generating accounting entries for the sales return.
(Col. 29 line 58 – Col. 30 line 9)

The remaining limitations are not taught by Wong, but are disclosed by Land:

determining whether the purchase order has a sales discount if no sales return has occurred, and (Col. 10 lines 1-50 ; Figure 11, item 490)

generating accounting entries for the sales discount if the purchase order has a sales discount; and (Col. 10 lines 1-50 ; Figure 11, item 490)

calculating a discount according to discount terms recorded in the purchase order;
(Col. 10 lines 1-50 ; Figure 11, item 490)

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time applicant's invention was made to modify the teachings of Wong relating to an automated web commerce system with an accounts receivable subsystem and sales return module to include the teachings of Land relating to a sales discount sub-procedure. The motivation for such a modification is described in Wong at (Col. 2, lines 43-49). There it discusses the need to overcome fragmentation of information where "the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing." Combining a sales discount module with a sales return module makes sense in that they are logically connected as basic adjustments to typical commercial transactions.

With regard to Claim 10, Wong teaches the method further comprising:

generating a sales return certificate for the purchase order.
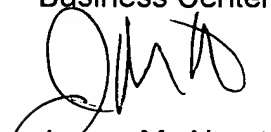(Col. 29 lines 23-39).

With regard to Claim 11, Wong teaches the method further comprising:

the delivery message is obtained from an inventory management system.
(Col. 26 lines 33-45).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James Alpert whose telephone number is (571) 272-6738. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:30-6:00. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vincent Millin can be reached on (571) 272-6747. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197.

James M. Alpert
June 6, 2005

VINCENT MILLIN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600